THE OBSERVER.

BY BEATRICE IRONSIDE.

The friend of Socrates—the friend of Plato,
But above all, the friend of Truth.

Vol. II. *Saturday, December* 12, 1807. *No.* 24.

For the Observer.

MUSICAL.

The Theatrical campaign may be said to have ended for the present season on Friday evening, at a Concert given by Mr. Webster in Bryden's large room in Light-street—The band, on this occasion, was conducted by the elder Huptfield ; the younger Huptfield performed a very difficult Concerto on the Violin, that master instrument, (if we may except the organ), and shewed great taste and execution ; but, whilst we wondered at his dexterity in handling the bow, there was nothing in the piece to interest the feelings ; we believe, that three fourths of the auditors would have been content with half of it.....Mrs. *Wilmot* sung several songs ; her two first were not much admired, but the two latter deserved and obtained applause.—It was on *Mr. Webster* himself that the burthen of the business lay—This gentleman is said to have been nursed and supported by the partiality of his countrymen ; and it must be confessed, that he this evening did ample credit to their fostering care—If the honor of Ireland depends on fine tones, swelling notes, and melodious cadences, it was well supported.....Excepting Braham and Incledon, we venture to say, that London itself could not produce more charming specimens of vocal music.....Webster was in fine voice, and gave his songs with superior feeling and execution.

His first song, "Ned of the Hill," by the celebrated Miss Owenson, was feeelingly given, and convinced all present of the excellence of his vocal powers—"The Willow" was also well sung, but seemed, in some points,

to be somewhat inferior to the first piece—We never heard him sing "The glasses sparkle on the board" with less pleasure; perhaps if he had had a dozen bottles of sparkling Champaign on the table before him, and a dozen of jolly fellows around him, he would have given it in better style—He sung "Ellen O'Moore" without accompanyments, and the man who did not admire and feel the force of this pathetic tale (unfortunately a true one) must have a heart of iron, a soul "fit for stratagems, for treasons, and for spoils"—Yet there are objections to this too melancholy ditty; it is too long; the best song from the best voice, ought not to be more than three verses. He gave "softly waft ye southern breezes," with all his *Italian* warblings; we suppose he did this on purpose, to shew us the difference between *Nature* & *Affectation*: but it should have convinced himself, that such *affectations* are as contrary to the good sense of his auditors, as they are against his own reputation. The entertainment concluded with the little piece entitled "The Rose," which Mr. Webster executed with all the sweetness and feeling of his first song, leaving a deep and lasting impression on the spectators, that his vocal powers, either for strength or melody, are far superior to any thing of the kind that we know in this country.

We have given this impartial criticism on Mr. Webster's performance, to shew him, that we are more willing to praise than censure him—If he were a common performer, we would not condescend to say so much about him.—We are not among the number of his enemies, but sincerely wish him to make a proper use of his uncommon powers—We have always, like true friends, told him the truth; and the time will come, if he has sufficient ballast to carry judicious sail through life, when he will have cause to consider us amongst his best friends.

Before we conclude, we shall venture to say a few words, not on *good music*, but on what an eminent author ranks among "the lesser moralities," viz.—*good breeding*...

There was only one fire-place in the room, which was

flanked on both sides by a number of ladies, who had wisely pushed forward to obtain comfortable seats for themselves—A parcel of *young men*—we will not call them *gentlemen*—completely blocked up the front of the fire-place, turned aside their clothes, and actually warmed their posteriors in the face of the whole company !—You will blush, Mrs. Editor, when you hear of the conduct of your townsmen, but it is a fact—Tell it not in London, publish it not in Edinburgh, or the *English* and the *Scotch* will point the finger of scorn at us, and say we are yet *American* barbarians !.....

That able satirist *Swift*, once gave directions for the conduct of servants—if he were now here, he might, in the same strain, teach the young men of Baltimore, how to behave either in public or private companies. It was a most impertinent regulation of Mr. Warren, to prevent our *Buckees* from smoking cigars in his house !....But, next season, we will order the Mayor to order the Manager to order his workmen, to erect two fire-places near the front of the stage, for the especial accommodation of our *young gentlemen*—there, at their ease, whilst they are staring at the ladies, they may talk of their girls and their giggs—they may smoke cigars, and squirt the juice about them in every direction—and, whilst they are warming their .....s, they may cry out, "damn all decency and good manners !"

X. Y. Z.

The following admirable satire upon "BALLSTON STYLE," will furnish ample amusement to those of our readers who are not regularly supplied with the keen and brilliant wit, which sparkles from the genius of the Editors of Salmagundi.

STYLE AT BALLSTON.

Notwithstanding Evergreen has never been abroad, nor had his understanding enlightened, or his views enlarged by that marvellous sharpener of the wits a salt-water voyage ; yet he is tolerably shrewd, and correct, in the limited sphere of his observasions; and, now and

then astounds me with a right pithy remark, which would do no discredit even to a man who had made the grand tour.

In several late conversations at Cockloft-Hall, he has amused us exceedingly by detailing sundry particulars concerning that notorious slaughter-house of time, Ballston Springs, where he spent a considerable part of the last summer. The following is a summary of his observations.

Pleasure has passed through a variety of significations at Ballston. It originally meant nothing more than a relief from pain and sickness; and the patient who had journeyed many a weary mile to the Springs, with a heavy heart and emaciated form, called it pleasure when he threw by his crutches, and danced away from them with renovated spirits and limbs jocund with vigour. In process of time pleasure underwent a refinement and appeared in the likeness of a sober unceremonious country-dance, to the flute of an amateur or the three-stringed fiddle of an itinerant country musician. Still every thing bespoke that happy holiday which the spirits ever enjoy, when emancipated from the shackles of formality, ceremony, and modern politeness. Things went on cheerily, and Ballston was pronounced a charming hum drum careless place of resort, where every one was at his ease and might follow unmolested the bent of his humour—provided his wife was not there—when, lo! all of a sudden *Style* made its baneful appearance in the semblance of a gig and tandem, a pair of leather breeches, a liveried footman and a cockney!—since that fatal era pleasure has taken an entire new signification, and at present means nothing but STYLE.

The worthy, fashionable, dashing, good-for-nothing people of every state, who had rather suffer the martyrdom of a crowd, than endure the monotony of their own homes, and the stupid company of their own thoughts, flock to the Springs—not to enjoy the pleasures of society, or benefit by the qualities of the waters, but to exhibit their equipages aud wardrobes, and to excite the

admiration, or what is much more satisfactory, the *envy* of their fashionable competitors. This of course awakens a spirit of noble emulation between the eastern, middle, and southern states, and every lady hereupon finding herself charged in a manner with the whole weight of her country's dignity and *style*, dresses and dashes, and sparkles, without mercy, at her competitors from other parts of the union. This kind of rivalship naturally requires a vast deal of preparation and prodigious quantities of supplies. A sober citizen's wife will break half a dozen milliners' shops, and sometimes starve her family a whole season, to enable herself to make the spring campaign in *style*—she repairs to the seat of war with a mighty force of trunks and bandboxes, like so many ammunition chests, filled with caps, hats, gowns, ribbons, shawls, and all the various artillery of fashionable warfare. The lady of a southern planter will lay out the whole annual produce of a rice plantation in silver and gold muslins, lace veils, and new liveries; carry a hogshead of tobacco on her head, and trail a bail of sea-island cotton at her heels—while a lady of Boston or Salem will wrap herself up in the nett proceeds of a cargo of whale oil, and tie on her hat with a quintal of codfish.

The planters' ladies, however, have generally the advantage in this contest; for, as it is an incontestable fact, that whoever comes from the West or East Indies, or Georgia, or the Carolinas, or in fact any warm climate, is immensely rich, it cannot be expected that a simple cit of the north can cope with them in *style*. The planter, therefore, who drives four horses abroad, and a thousand negroes at home, and who flourishes up to the Springs followed by half a score of black-a-moors in gorgeous liveries, is unquestionably superiour to the northern merchant, who plods on in a carriage and pair; which being nothing more than is quite *necessary*, has no claim whatever to *style*. He, however, has his consolation in feeling superiour to the honest cit, who dashes about in a simple gig—he in return sneers at the coun-

try squire, who jogs along with his scrubby long-eared poney and saddle bags; and the squire, by way of taking satisfaction, would make no scruple to run over the unobtrusive pedestrian, were it not that the last, being the most independent of the whole, might chance to break his head by way of retort.

The great misfortune is, that this *style* is supported at such an expense as sometimes to encroach on the rights and privileges of the pocket, and occasion very awkward embarrassments to the tyro of fashion. Among a number of instances, Evergreen mentions the fate of a dashing blade from the south, who made his *entre* with a tandem and two outriders, by the aid of which he attracted the attention of all the ladies, and caused a coolness between several young couple who, it was thought before his arrival, had a considerable kindness for each other. In the course of a fortnight his tandem disappeared!—the class of good folk who seem to have nothing to do in this world but pry into other people's affairs—began to stare!—in a little time longer an outrider was missing—this increased the alarm, and it was consequently whispered that he had eaten the horses, and drank the negro.——(N. B. Southern gentlemen are very apt to do this on an emergency.)—Serious apprehensions were entertained about the fate of the remaining servant, which were soon verified, by his actually vanishing—and in "one little month" the dashing carolinian modestly took his departure in the *Stage-Coach!*—universally regretted by the friends who had generously released him from his cumberous load of *style*.

Evergreen, in the course of his detail, gave very melancholy accounts of an alarming famine which raged with great violence at the Springs. Whether this was owing to the incredible appetites of the company, or the scarcity which prevailed at the inns, he did not seem inclined to say, but he declares, that he was for several days in imminent danger of starvation, owing to his being a little too dilatory in his attendance at the dinner-table. He relates a number of "moving accidents,"

which befel many of the polite company in their zeal to get a good seat at dinner; on which occasion a kind of scrub-race always took place, wherein a vast deal of jockeying and unfair play was shown, and a variety of squabbles and unseemly altercations occurred. But when arrived at the scene of action, it was truly an awful sight to behold the confusion, and to hear the tumultuous uproar of voices crying out, some for one thing, and some for another, to the tuneful accompanyment of knives and forks, rattling with all the energy of hungry impatience.—The feast of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ was nothing when compared with a dinner at the *Great House*. At one time, an old gentleman, whose natural irascibility was a little sharpened by the gout, had scalded his throat, by gobbling down a bowl of hot soup in a vast hurry, in order to secure the first fruits of a roasted partridge before it was snapped up by some hungry rival; when, just as he was whetting his knife and fork, preparatory for a descent on the promised land, he had the mortification to see it transferred, bodily, to the plate of a squeamish little damsel, who was taking the waters for debility and loss of appetite. This was too much for the patience of old Crusty; he lunged his fork into the partridge, whipt it into his dish, and cutting off a wing of it,—"There, miss, there's more than you can eat—Oons! what should such a little chalky-faced puppet as you do with a whole partridge!"—At another time a mighty sweet disposed old dowager, who loomed most magnificently at the table, had a sauce-boat launched upon the capacious lap of a silver-sprigged muslin gown, by the manœuvring of a little politick frenchman, who was dexterously attempting to make a lodgement under the covered way of a chicken-pie—Human nature could not bear it!—the lady bounced round, and, with one box on the ear, drove the luckless wight to utter annihilation.

But these little cross accidents are amply compensated by the great variety of amusement which abounds at this charming resort of beauty and fashion. In the

morning the company, each like a jolly bacchanalian, with glass in hand, sally forth to the Spring; where the gentlemen, who wish to make themselves agreeable, have an opportunity of *dipping* themselves into the good opinion of the ladies: and it is truly delectable to see with what grace and adroitness they perform this ingratiating feat. Anthony says that it is peculiarly amazing to behold the quantity of water the ladies drink on this occasion, for the purpose of getting an appetite for breakfast. He assures me he has been present when a young lady of unparalleled delicacy, tossed of in the space of a minute or two, one and twenty tumblers and a wine-glass full. On my asking Anthony whether the solicitude of the bye-standers was not greatly awakened as to what might be the *effects* of this *debauch*; he replied, that the ladies at Ballston had become such great sticklers for the doctrine of *evaporation*, that no gentleman ever ventured to remonstrate against this excessive drinking, for fear of bringing his philosophy into contempt. The most notorious water-drinkers in particular, were continually holding forth on the surprising aptitude with which the Ballston waters *evaporated*; and several gentlemen, who had the hardihood to question this female philosophy where held in high displeasure.

After breakfast, every one chooses his amusement—some take a ride into the pine woods, and enjoy the varied and romantick scenery of burnt trees, post and rail fences, pine flats, potatoe patches and log huts—others scramble up the surrounding sand hills, that look like the abodes of a gigantic race of ants—take a peep at other sand hills beyond them—and then—come down again; others who are romantick (and sundry young ladies insist upon being so whenever they visit the Springs, or go any where into the country) stroll along the borders of a little swampy brook that drags itself along like an alexandrine, and that, so lazily, as not to make a single murmur—watching the little tadpoles, as they frolick right flippantly in the muddy stream, and listening to the inspiring melody of the harmonious frogs that croak

upon its borders. Some play at billiards, some play the fiddle, and some—play the fool—the latter being the most prevalent amusement at Ballston.

These, together with abundance of dancing, and a prodigious deal of sleeping of afternoons, make up the variety of pleasures at the Springs—a delicious life of alternate lassitude and fatigue, of laborious dissipation, and listless idleness, of sleepless nights, and days spent in that dozing insensibility which ever succeeds them. Now and then, indeed, the influenza, the fever-and-ague, or some such pale-faced intruder may happen to throw a momentary damp on the general felicty ; but on the whole, Evergreen declares that Ballston wants only six things ; to wit, good air, good wine, good living, good beds, good company, and good humour, to be the most enchanting place in the world—excepting Botany-bay, Musquito Cove, Dismal Swamp, and the Black hole at Calcutta.

For the Observer.

COLLEGE OF ANATOMY & MEDICINE.

After the extravagant prejudices which have led the SOVEREIGN PEOPLE to commit the outrages they have lately practised against the infant school of Medicine and Anatomy, so essential, or rather so indispensable to the Art of Healing, it might have been expected that some truly patriotic voice would have been raised, to convince those who were guilty of these excesses, how dangerous to the best interests of society, is the indulgence of so barbarous and fanatical a spirit, how injurious it is to the living who are dear to them, to public order, and to the sacred rights of property.

One single appeal to good sense, published under the signature of *Celsus*, has appeared on this subject, and *it was like a voice in the desart*. Nor is this all—*profound thinkers*, scrupulous men, have come forward, to condemn this appeal, in giving their approbation to the popular tumult which gave rise to it. Was it because the

attack was made only on the demesne of learning and science, for infallibly these same men would have cried out against tyranny, anarchy, and *sacrilege*, if a mob had broken in their warehouse doors and laid waste a few barrels of lard or codfish, as if an anatomical school were not as much property, & property of a nature more interesting to the public at large, than some pounds of hog's fat or gallons of molasses.

However, a petition is now before the legislature of our state, in order to obtain a charter for a *College of Medicine*, to be protected by the state itself. It is not yet known in what part of the town this useful and honorable establishment may be effected, nor whether the Medical Society will finally agree with those persons who have already offered them a situation for the purpose; but on this point, we may be permitted to observe, that it is at once a reproach and a disgrace to the United States, states the most vastly extensive in the world, and where the population is so completely disproportioned to the extent of territory, that our Federal states have not the spirit to sacrifice A FEW ACRES OF GROUND to promote the establishment of Academies, and learned societies.—— Assuredly it would never be believed in Europe, that in the almost boundless country of the United States, establishments at once so necessary and so honourable, are compelled to exhaust in the acquisition of suitable ground those funds which are with so much difficulty obtained from the generosity of individuals, and which it would be so highly important to appropriate to the construction of buildings and the purchase of apparatus necessary to the full developement of the Sciences and the Fine Arts. There is no doubt, that but for those interested views which so much trammel the exertions of men of genius and merit, we should already have had schools amongst us which would have very soon elevated the American name to that pinnacle of glory, which should be the object of emulation to all to whom national honour is dear. It would be a great and noble project to unite in one central spot, a College *of Medicine with one of the Arts.*—

Philadelphia has a Museum, an Amphitheatre of Medicine and Chymistry, and an Academy of the fine Arts.

It is well known that in our principal cities there are men of the first rate talents who singly can do nothing important, whilst were they afforded the opportunity of being useful, genius would be drawn forth from the gloom in which it now languishes; and they would essentially benefit society, could they meet with that efficacious protection from our legislatures which alone can enable them to unite together in order to promote general advantage.

E.

.....

POLITE LITERATURE.

From the Port Folio.

MR. OLDSCHOOL,

At the commencement of the last volume of The Port Folio, save one, a change was made in the *Orthography* of its pages by restoring the authority of Johnson; which is indeed the only real standard of our language. This reformation, Mr. Oldschool, has had the influence which might have been anticipated from the high rank of the paper, and was unquestionably gratifying to those of your admirers, who are in the habit of looking up to the Port Folio, as the criterion of their taste in most matters of literature. But while so judicious a revision was made, and alteration was so happily applied, one errour crept into your press, and has since resolutely held its place. I refer to the word *author*, which your printers invariably give us as *authour*. This orthography is not justified by Johnson, or by any other Lexicographer whom I have consulted. The true spelling of the word must be allowed, indeed, to be an anomaly; for the parent words in Latin and French have the same termination as the parents of *honour*, &c. Of course, if the rule with regard to *honour* were uniform in its application, the insertion of *u* in *author* would be justifiable. But at present it is enough for us that such an interpolation has been hitherto unathorized. And as the errour in The Port Folio

probably arose from oversight, I presume I have only to point it out.

Allow me a word or two on another head. The employment of the preposition *from,* prefixed to the adverbs *whence, thence* and *hence*, has always appeared to me, not only redundant, but extremely uncouth. Johnson says it is a "vitious expression;" and yet instances of its use may be found in our best writers. L. Murray, if my memory is correct, is neutral on the subject. Does the Editor of The Port Folio believe, that the phrase can be justified by any principle of our language? That it is justified by authority, the following instances will amply prove.

"Another obstruction to the fortune of youth is, that while they are all so equally desirous of giving nobody offence. *From hence* they endeavour to please all," &c.

GOLDSMITH's 12th Essay.

"Friendship is like a debt of honour—the more it is talked of it loses its real name, and assumes the more ungrateful form of obligation. *From hence* we find, &c.

Goldsmith's Essay, 26th.

"No problem has more embarrassed the learned, than to give an account *from whence* the Americans sprung."

Lord Kaimes.

"At her coming into the room, I observed a settled melancholy in her countenance, which I should have been troubled for, had I not heard *from whence* it proceeded."

Addison, Spectator No. 7.

"Here we see the head increasing insensibly to the middle, *from whence* it lessens gradually until it mixes with the neck," &c.

Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful, p. 8. Sec. 15.

In the first examples (Goldsmith) the use of FROM is shocking to one who has an ear for composition, and in both the ease and gracefulness of the style would be rather improved by expunging it. In the instances from Kaimes and Addison it may, perhaps, be admitted, that the *froms* are essential to the roundness and harmony of the peri-

ods; in the instances from Burke, I will venture to say, that the term *which* might be substituted for *whence*, with strict propriety, though not with elegance. C.

.....

From the "Athenæum."

MEMOIRS OF EZZELINO DA ROMANO.

(Continued.)

It was the great object of Ezzelino to render himself master of Padua, and for that purpose he was continually plotting with the partisans whom he possessed in that city, and who were daily becoming more numerous. Their machinations being discovered, a number of them left the city and joined Ezzelino and the imperial troops; but their departure was far from restoring quiet and unanimity. The approach of the imperialists augmented the confusion in the city; the marquis of Este thought proper to join the emperor's party; the devastation of the surrounding country filled the wealthy citizens with discontent: and in fine it was agreed that Ezzelino and count Goboardo, with their followers, should be peaceably admitted into Padua.

Hitherto Ezzelino had either masked his real character, or the tyrant was not yet matured in him. An antient chronicler thus decribes him previous to his entrance into Padua. "He was of a middling stature, with extremely lively eyes and a pleasant countenance, and light hair inclining to red. He was sedate in his demeanour, eloquent, polite, and agreeable in conversation; terrible to his enemies, courteous and affable to his friends; faithful in the performance of his promises, steady in his purposes, grave and deliberate in his discourse, provident in his counsels, and, in fine, laudable in every action of his life." He soon shewed himself a master in politics; for, having been nominated podesta of the city at an assembly of the principal citizens, he went out of the hall in appearance much troubled at the burthen imposed upon him; and during his absence, those who knew his mind proposed that he

should be requested to appoint to that office any person whom he should think fit. After a feigned reluctance, he named a creature of his own: for, in fact, he had greater things in view than a local magistracy. He persuaded count Goboardo to return to Germany, leaving him in the post of imperial vicar of all the Marche of Treviso, with the full command of all the foreign troops. These were chiefly Germans; but there was the singular mixture of 300 Saracens, to whom, as particularly attached to his interest, Ezzelino confided the guard of the gates of the city and the principal fortresses. Many of the Paduans having emigrated on the change of affairs, and taken possession of the strong castle of Montagnone in the neighbourhood, Ezzelino attempted to reduce it; but not succeeding, he began his tyrannical practices by obliging many of the principal families of Padua to give hostages. He also assembled about twenty of the leading men whose fidelity he most suspected, and with much apparent civility advised them for a time to withdraw from the city, assuring them that they should soon be recalled; but when they had complied with his desire, he took care that they should all be apprehended at their country seats or in the neighbouring towns, and sent to remote castles under his authority, where they were detained as prisoners. He also began to confiscate the effects and demolish the palaces of all those who emigrated through fear of his tyranny; and from the ruins he erected some strong fortresses to bridle the city. An attempt made by the marquis Azzo of Este and the Paduan emigrants, in 1238, to get possession of the city, was defeated by the vigilance of Ezzelino, who made it the pretext of further severities against the disaffected. He was also able so well to justify himself against the accusations of his enemies, before the emperor, who had again visited Italy, that his authority received fresh confirmation.

It would be tedious and disgusting to enumerate all the steps in the progress of this tyrant to a despotism, the cruelty of which is scarcely to be paralleled in modern

history. It will suffice to note a few of the most striking and characteristic circumstances recorded in the work before us. Against the emperor and Ezzelino, who were endeavouring to reduce all this part of Italy, a powerful league was formed between the pope, the state of Venice, the Milanese, Bolognese, the marquis of Este, and Alberico, the brother of Ezzelino, whose daughter had married a son of the marquis. Of their joint forces the marquis was made captain, and he gained possession of Ferrara. The league had many friends in Padua, whose correspondences were occasionally discovered, or at least, suspected, and served continually to irritate the jealous fury of the tyrant. Executions, with every circumstance of barbarity, became more and more frequent, and the numbers of the imprisoned daily augmented. In a strong castle, erected within the limits of the city, was a range of horrid dungeons, into which not a ray of light, nor a breath of air was admitted. Their architect was one Zilio, a Milanese, who, falling under the tyrant's displeasure, was their first occupier; and from him they were named the Zilie. They were soon filled with persons suspected of disaffection, who underwent in them the utmost extremity of human misery. In the mean time the vigour and abilities of Ezzelino rendered him successful in most of his enterprizes, and in 1250 he possessed Verona, Vicenza, Padua, Feltre, and Belluno, besides numerous castles and fortresses. His brother Alberico was master of Treviso, and though in appearance they were enemies, it is said that they had a secret intelligence and acted in concert.

To be continued.

ERRATA,

In No. 23, page 365, for *Assyria*, read *Syria*.

POETRY.

ON CENSURE.

FROM SWIFT.

YE Wise, instruct me to endure
An Evil, which admits no Cure:
Or, how this evil can be borne,
Which breeds at once both Hate and Scorn.
Bare Innocence is no support,
When you are try'd in Scandal's court.
Stand high in honour, wealth, or wit;
All others, who inferior sit,
Conceive themselves in conscience bound
To join, and drag you to the ground.
Your altitude offends the eyes
Of those who want the pow'r to rise.
The world, a willing stander-by,
Inclines to aid a specious lie:
Alas! they would not do you wrong;
But, all Appearances are strong.

Yet, whence proceeds this weight we lay
On what detracting people say?
For, let mankind discharge their tongues
In venom, till they burst their lungs,
Their utmost malice cannot make
Your head, or tooth, or finger ake;
Nor spoil your shape, distort your face,
Or put one feature out of place;
Nor will you find your fortune sink,
By what they speak, or what they think.
Nor can ten hundred thousand lies,
Make you less virtuous, learn'd, or wise.

The most effectual way to baulk
Their malice, is——to let them talk.

S. MAGILL, Printer, 9, South-Street.